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MARXISM VERSUS CRUDE COMMUNISM

*Novosti Press Agency Publishing House
Moscow, 1975*

Editing completed on June 25, 1975

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Crude egalitarian communism arose as a school of thought within utopian socialism.

Its ideologists dreamed of a society founded on the principles of equality and justice. But they saw, however, no need for building a highly developed technical basis for such society. The ideal society as conceived by them was characterized by egalitarian distribution, uniformity in consumption and universal asceticism, and underestimation and sometimes even direct negation of culture, disdain for the interests of the individual, etc.

These ideas, which have a long history, enjoy some currency today as well. They are enunciated by Trotskyists, anarchists, the "New Left" and other leftist groups. They have been espoused by Maoism.

Attempts are often made to present crude egalitarian communism as Marxism-Leninism. There is absolutely no ground for such identification. Marxism-Leninism and crude egalitarian communism differ fundamentally in their understanding of the socio-economic relations of communist society. The founders of Marxism-Leninism subjected the basic theses of crude egalitarian communism to consistent, comprehensive criticism. Their principles and traditions of struggle against this anti-scientific interpretation of communism remain fully valid today.

CHAPTER I

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE IDEOLOGY OF CRUDE EGALITARIAN COMMUNISM

"Crude communism" was the term Karl Marx applied to the utopian ideas about a society founded on justice, as the alternative to the exploitative system, which envisaged the establishment of collectivist relations through strict observance of the principle of universal egalitarianism in every sphere of private and social life. This ideology was called communist because, in opposition to private-proprietary, self-seeking aspirations, it put forward the demand for "community", although, as distinct from scientific communism, it interpreted this concept in a highly primitive, superficial way.

The main features of the ideology of crude egalitarian communism took shape long ago, and at the time Marxism emerged upon the historical arena, crude egalitarian communism represented one of the most developed forms of utopian thought. The ideology of crude egalitarian communism arose at the time when the bourgeois order was emerging and pre-capitalist relations still predominated, and therefore reflected that characteristic feature of the epoch. To understand the historical and socio-economic roots of crude egalitarian communism it is necessary to know the situation in which it arose, and which Marx characterized in the following words: "...We, like all the rest of Continental Western Europe, suffer not only from the development of capitalist production but also from the incompleteness of that development. Alongside all modern evils, a whole series of inherited evils oppress us, arising from the passive

survival of antiquated modes of production, with their inevitable train of social and political anachronisms. We suffer not only from the living, but from the dead.”¹

This situation, described as typical for the middle of the 19th century, was to a still greater degree characteristic of the preceding stages of West European capitalism and made itself felt in many ways, including ideological trends.

Crude egalitarian communism arose from the traditions and principles that idealized the patriarchal relations of the peasant community, and from petty-bourgeois egalitarianism. In the process of the decay of feudalism and emergence of the capitalist mode of production, crude egalitarian communism constituted an important element of the ideology of the various semi-proletarian strata which Engels described as transitional to the modern proletariat. These social strata resulting from the stratification of the peasantry and the break-up of the craft guilds, were highly heterogeneous. They comprised workers of artisan workshops in the employ of small entrepreneurs, the rural poor earning their livelihood not only through work on their farms, but by selling their labour power, various small proprietors, dominated in many intricate ways by big capital and drawn into the processes of proletarianization, lumpen elements of the urban plebeian masses, etc.

These sections of the population gradually falling within the orbit of capitalist exploitation, usually retained close ties of all kinds with the petty-bourgeois structure and its ideology. This was determined by the character of their labour based on manual technology, and by the system of undeveloped social relations into which they were drawn. Even in the case

¹ K. Marx, *Capital*, Moscow, 1962, Vol. 1, p. 9.

of the elements which were most fully involved in the sphere of developing capitalist relations, the manufactory workers (the immediate predecessors of the working class), petty-bourgeois influences not only came from without but were constantly reproduced within the group. Their labour, just as that of small independent producers, was based on handicraft technology; the workers were not as yet fully deprived of the means of production.¹ A widespread decentralization of the production process was characteristic of the manufactory stage of capitalist development, and thus labour (like that in the small proprietor's economy) did not assume a distinctly social character, while the wage workers were disunited. These features were particularly typical of the representatives of the "domestic industry" of the town and especially the countryside, who were drawn into the orbit of decentralized capitalist production by agents of commercial and industrial capital. Having arisen on the site of the decaying pre-capitalist forms of production (domestic peasant handicrafts within the framework of subsistence farming, and urban handicrafts), the domestic industry acquired a new social and economic significance, becoming in Marx's words, "an outside department of the factory". However, the immediate producer retained the status of economic "independence", which largely determined the specifics of his social psychology.

A distinguishing feature of the pre-proletariat was its close, often most direct and immediate connection

¹ Engels stressed that, as distinct from the proletarian employed in a capitalist factory, "the manufactory worker of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries almost everywhere still had the ownership of his instrument of production, his loom, his family spinning wheels, and a little plot of land which he cultivated in his leisure hours." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 84.)

with agriculture, with the peasantry and its ideology. The poorest peasant strata drawn to some or other extent into the sphere of capitalist exploitation constituted its integral part. While the factory proletariat was concentrated primarily in large cities and its relations with the employers were purely of a commodity-money character, the manufactory worker lived "almost exclusively in the country under more or less patriarchal relations with his landlord or his employer"¹; only large-scale industry wrested him from his patriarchal conditions and placed him in direct opposition to the capitalist class, destroying the conditions under which "in country and town master and workmen stood together socially".²

As a full-fledged class of bourgeois society with all its specific features "the proletariat arose as a result of the industrial revolution."³ Linked with the most progressive technical-economic basis, fully separated from the means of production and directly opposed to the bourgeoisie, the industrial proletariat concentrated at large enterprises (which furthered its organization and unity) differed cardinally from the motley semi-proletarian and pre-proletarian strata which constituted a transitional stage to the modern, i. e., industrial working class.

This fact is not only of historical and theoretical significance but is extremely relevant in the modern context. Seeking to prove the "proletarian" character of its line, Maoism deliberately confuses the concepts of "propertyless strata" and "proletariat", denying the specifics and the historical role of the industrial working class. According to Mao Tse-tung, factory

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 84.

² K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1962, p. 737.

³ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 81.

workers, handicraftsmen, etc., are in equal measure "associated with the most advanced form of economy" and "stand out for their organization and discipline."

The Maoists identify the working class with the declassed lumpenproletariat, which was fairly large in China on the eve of the Chinese revolution and made up a considerable part of the People's Liberation Army, from which later on Mao Tse-tung recruited his leading cadres. The founders of Marxism-Leninism pointed to differences between the lumpenproletariat and the industrial working class, stressing that the unstable lumpenproletariat tends towards adventurism and is "the worst of all the possible allies"¹ and that the existence of "vagabond and semi-vagabond elements" may give rise to "much friction and many clashes" during the transition to socialist construction.²

Accordingly, the views of broad semi-proletarian masses and even of the most revolutionary-minded sections of the pre-proletariat could not but differ fundamentally from the ideas espoused by those members of the industrial proletariat who had come to realize that their true class aims were expressed in the theory of scientific communism. Crude egalitarian communism was steeped in a mass of petty-bourgeois ideas and enmeshed in the prejudices of the society it negated. As Marx stressed, crude egalitarian communism remained captive to private property and was "infected by it."³

The ideas of crude egalitarian communism were apparent in European social thought of the 16th and

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 163.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, pp. 468-69.

³ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 90.

17th centuries, and found a particularly comprehensive and systematized expression in France in the latter half of the 18th century, both in the pre-revolutionary period (works by Mably and Morelly) and during the Great French Revolution (the views of Babeuf and his associates in the "Conspiracy of Equals"). These ideas had an exceedingly strong impact on the subsequent development of utopian communist thought in France, Germany and other countries of continental Europe. The principles of crude egalitarian communism formulated in the 18th century were adopted by many theoreticians of the later period and even overstepped the sphere of their direct influence (for instance, the ideas of Babouism). At the time when the foundations of Marxism were being laid, the ideas of crude egalitarian communism determined in large measure the tone of the communist press of that period, the character of programmes advanced and the content of the propaganda conducted by secret revolutionary societies ("Phalanges démocratiques", "Saisons", "Travailleurs-égalitaires", etc.) They exerted a considerable influence on the views of prominent theoreticians (Cabet, Villegardelle, and to some extent Weitling).

In the 1840s the ideas of crude egalitarian communism began to spread among the working class, a process which was furthered by surviving petty-bourgeois tendencies within the proletariat and even the most revolutionary-minded part of it. At that time both in economically backward, feudal-junker Germany and in France the proletariat consisted for the most part (despite the industrial revolution that was under way), not of industrial workers, but of labourers engaged in manufactory production, workers of small handicraft-type workshops who were held in bondage by merchant capital, etc. Moreover, the industrial workers, recently drawn from the pea-

santry, had far less experience, skills and traditions of class struggle than the urban craftsmen.

The ideas of crude egalitarian communism influenced the theoretical platform of the League of the Just, an international organization the nucleus of which was composed of German emigré workers and on the basis of which Marx and Engels founded the Communist League, the first international revolutionary working-class organization.

The strong impact of the ideology of crude egalitarian communism, which threatened to push the working class movement onto a highly perilous path, made the creation of a truly scientific ideology of the proletariat an extremely urgent historical task. The historical situation on the eve of the revolutionary events of 1848, which drew broad masses of the European proletariat into active political action, made it imperative for the working class to realize its fundamental class interests and its place in society.

The development of a scientific world outlook directed against the dominant bourgeois ideology necessitated at the same time resolute dissociation from the immature concepts of the period of the "infancy of the labour movement." While paying due tribute to utopian socialism in an historical aspect, critically studying it and incorporating into their system the "brilliant insights" of its best representatives such as Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen, Marx and Engels totally rejected the "positive programme" of "ill-thought-out communism" with its reactionary elements. Marx made their position absolutely clear when he pointed out back in the early 1840s, that his *Reinische Zeitung* did not recognize even the *theoretical validity* of the communist ideas in the utopian form they took at that time and hence still less could it wish their *practical realization* or even regard it as possible.

In one of his first works, *Achievements of the Movement for Social Change on the Continent* (1843), Engels characterized crude egalitarian communism as "highly primitive and superficial." An exceptionally profound assessment of this ideology is given in *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, *The Holy Family* and *The German Ideology*.

The Manifesto of the Communist Party also contains a brilliant dialectical approach to the problem and a well-formulated characterization of the ideology of crude egalitarian communism. The historical aspect of the question was dealt with in a number of Engels' later works such as *The Peasant War in Germany*, *Anti-Dühring* and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.

Finally, the very essence of Marxism—its concept of communist society—provides an effective alternative to the anti-scientific ideas of crude egalitarianism and a theoretical basis for their criticism.

The theoretical criticism of the ideology of crude egalitarian communism was inseparable from the practical revolutionary activity of the founders of Marxism, and from their struggle to build a proletarian party, which they regarded as essential to their revolutionary theory and practice and as a definite form of proletarian political organization.

Marx's and Engels' analysis of the ideas of crude egalitarian communism was eminently dialectical. While exposing the untenability of its views on the system of relations of the future society, they did not disparage all the ideologists of crude egalitarianism but evaluated their views in the concrete historical situation.

The basic ideas of utopian socialism and communism survived the crisis they experienced in the mid-nineteenth century. In later historical epochs they reappeared time and time again, reflecting the petty-

bourgeois illusions and prejudices of backward sections of the working class and various semiproletarian and lumpen urban and rural strata drawn into the revolutionary movement.

As the socio-economic structures grew more complex and ideological struggle became correspondingly more intense and diversified, the ideas of crude egalitarian communism assumed different forms depending on the national-historical, socio-economic and political factors involved, merging closely with various other theories.

These ideas served as a theoretical source for numerous shades of petty-bourgeois socialism that subsequently developed and for leftist revisionism.

It became particularly necessary to combat crude egalitarian trends during the general crisis of capitalism when the theoretical question of the economic organization of socialist society acquired a practical significance and now faced millions of people. There was a real danger of socialist construction being directed into the channel of crude egalitarian communism because history was developing in such a way that capitalism was being overthrown, primarily in countries where conditions were favourable for the spread of these ideas: backward pre-industrial forms of production survived on a large scale and the peasants were mostly poor, many of them being ruined and proletarianized and there were strong petty-bourgeois influences within the working-class movement, etc.

This problem urgently confronted the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the very first stages of the existence of the Soviet state. Reflecting the pressure of the petty-bourgeois element on the proletariat and its party, various opportunistic trends such as the Left Communists, the Workers' Opposition and the Trotskyists, tried to thrust upon the country per-

nicious methods for building socialism that bore the obvious imprint of crude egalitarianism.

These tendencies were inherent to the highest degree in Trotskyism, which sought to turn the country into a model of "barracks communism". This adventurous line, inimical to the interests of the working people and camouflaged by strident protestations of loyalty to Marxism, was rejected by the Party in the course of strenuous struggle. Lenin laid bare the theoretical impotence of Trotskyism, which he called, "a real theoretical muddle" and "an economic absurdity,"¹ and emphasised the harmfulness of the Trotskyist line to the socialist cause, countering it and other anti-Marxist platforms with a concrete, truly scientific programme for laying the foundations of communist society.

The ideas of crude egalitarian communism have found their fullest, clearest and often the most extreme expression in the policies of the Maoist leadership of China.² Of course, contemporary Chinese society cannot be said to be a mechanical realization of the principles borrowed by the Maoist leadership from publications of hundreds of years ago. There is no doubt, however, that utopian socialism was one of the ideological and theoretical sources of Maoism, and this was admitted by Mao-Tse-tung himself in a talk with the American journalist Edgar Snow. On the whole, the Chinese leadership is not guided consistently by any definite clearly formulated theory.

Maoism is extremely eclectic in theoretical matters and is essentially pragmatic; it aims at attaining its

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 28, 104.

² It is noteworthy that since the beginning of the 1960s the leadership of the Trotskyist "Fourth International" has published numerous statements expressing solidarity with the Chinese leadership's line and pointing out that the Maoists' views fully coincide with Trotsky's ideas.

self-seeking ends and justifying its changing tactical line. The Maoists were pushed onto the road of crude egalitarian communism by the very logic of their unbridled petty-bourgeois voluntarism over questions of socialist construction by their hegemonic claims to leadership in the world communist movement and, in direct connection with this, by their desire to reject the experience of the socialist countries and oppose it with their "truly revolutionary methods."

The basic principles of the economic model of crude egalitarian communism made it possible to exercise rigid centralized control over all aspects of socio-economic life and mobilize resources for an intensive build-up of the military-industrial potential. Though there is no direct military threat to China, the Maoists have been able to create an atmosphere of fear by harping on the imaginary "menace from the North". The founders of utopian communist thought were sincere in their desire to improve the condition of the masses, although they did not see how they should go about it. To the Maoists, "concern for the common good" is a demagogic screen designed to conceal the adventurist aims of their military-bureaucratic dictatorship.

In seeking to instil the principles of primitive egalitarianism, Maoism employs ultra-revolutionary phrasology and takes advantage of the socialist aspirations of the working people. At the same time it adroitly utilizes and encourages the petty-bourgeois tendencies characteristic of different strata of Chinese society: the peasantry, the immature sections of the proletariat (which are the great majority), numerous semiproletarian and lumpen elements, etc. The ideas of crude egalitarian communism manifested themselves most fully during the period of the "three red banners" line and during the "cultural revolution."

The sad results of these campaigns are generally known. Chinese practice has demonstrated as clearly as can be the economic insolvency of crude egalitarian communism and its hostile attitude towards the genuine interests of the working people. Hence it is important that scientific communism should criticize this ideology comprehensively and profoundly.

CHAPTER II

SUBJECTIVIST AND VOLUNTARIST UNDERSTANDING OF COMMUNIST SOCIETY

Crude egalitarian communism, in the same way as utopian socialism as a whole, is characterized by its subjectivist-idealistic, voluntarist approach. Its ideologists deduced the need for communism, not from objective historical conditions, but from the "demands of intelligent reason", from the "eternal quest for justice", etc. They did not embark on a scientific investigation of historical development, but constructed their system as an ideal which was to be imposed on reality and to which the latter was obediently to conform.

"The Utopians' mode of thought has for a long time governed the socialist ideas of the nineteenth century, and still governs some of them," Engels wrote in the 1870s. "Until very recently all French and English Socialists did homage to it. The earlier German communism, including that of Weitling, was of the same school. To all these socialism is the expression of absolute truth, reason and justice" and as such it is "independent of time, space, and of the historical development of man..."¹ These theoretical illusions directly influenced the development of the adventurist line of action of leftist petty-bourgeois trends within and outside the working class.

Weitling's contention that mankind is ready for communism "always or never" was a clear concentra-

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 126.

ted expression of this tendency. It influenced and continues to influence the position of different leftist, "ultra-revolutionary" elements, particularly over such questions as the overthrow of the political power of the bourgeoisie and socialist construction, and in demands for a "speedy, forced march to communism".

In the case of representatives of early utopian socialism, voluntarism was inevitable, since general social relations were immature. "The solution of the social problems, which as yet lay hidden in undeveloped economic conditions, the Utopians attempted to evolve out of the human brain."¹ In subsequent periods the subjectivist voluntarist approach to questions of the theory and practice of socialism fully reflected the specifics of petty-bourgeois mentality with its characteristic narrow-mindedness, worship of spontaneity, its zig-zagging and inability to make a sober, objective analysis and engage in painstaking day-to-day practical work.

Marxism-Leninism takes a fundamentally different approach to the problems of the communist mode of production. Analyzing human society from an integral, consistent materialist position, Marx and Engels were the first to approach the problems of communism, not as amateurs, but as true scientists. They displayed a fundamentally new approach to the understanding of social reality—the method of materialist dialectics—and turned socialism from a utopia into a science. As distinct from their predecessors, the founders of Marxism saw history, not as a chaotic agglomeration of events, a chain of man's mistakes and delusions, or Weitling's fairy-tale in which honest men are invariably fooled. Through the diversity of historical events they discerned the

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 119.

contours of "a single process which, with all its immense variety and contradictoriness, is governed by definite laws",¹ and showed that communist society is a natural stage in this process. For the historical development of mankind is based on the development of material production, on the laws of the movement of productive forces and relations of production, operating through the mass activity of people. ". . . the final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange," Engels stressed. "They are to be sought, not in the *philosophy*, but in the *economics* of each particular epoch."²

Marxism showed that communism would inevitably triumph, because, most important of all, of the operation of the general economic laws of social development and the specific economic laws of capitalism, and that the building of the new society demands "a certain material ground-work or set of conditions of existence which in their turn are the spontaneous product of a long and painful process of development".³ Holding that social development has its motive force in constant perfection of the instruments of production and corresponding changes in the mode of production of material goods, Marxism based its ideas of future social progress on objective trends and requirements born of the development of large-scale machine industry. The idea that communism is the consequence of large-scale industry and its concomitants was comprehensively elaborated upon in *Capital*. Marx showed how the fierce competitive struggle after profit inevitably com-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 57.

² F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1962, p. 365.

³ K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1962, p. 80.

pels capitalism to develop and perfect the productive forces, thereby creating the material prerequisites for socialism. By concentrating production and promoting the social division of labour, developed mechanized industry socialized the process of production and thus created the objective need for planned guidance of the economy in the interests of the whole society, something that can only be done under socialism. The founders of Marxism showed that mechanized industry had given rise to the proletariat which would eventually develop into a real social force capable of overthrowing the bourgeois system.

Developing Marx's and Engels' teaching, Lenin has proved that a law of uneven development operates in the epoch of imperialism, and that the system *as a whole* is already ripe for the transition to socialism. The capitalist chain, he argued, would be broken at that link where the socio-economic contradictions were the sharpest, and where there were real social forces capable of using the revolutionary situation for bringing about cardinal social changes. It was not necessarily countries with the highest level of production that were to become such a link. However, after overthrowing the power of the exploiter forces, whatever the level of production, the working people had to create a highly developed and constantly improving technical and economic basis for the building of socialism. The system of socio-economic relations characteristic of socialism, to say nothing of communism, can only emerge on the basis of highly developed productive forces. As Lenin stressed, arguing for the need for industrialization in the USSR, "Large-scale machine industry and its extension to agriculture is the only possible economic basis for socialism."¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 49.

The communist mode of production will ensure the most vigorous development of the productive forces. "Once liberated from the yoke of private ownership," Engels wrote in the mid-1840s, "large-scale industry will develop on a scale that will make its present level of development seem as paltry as seems the manufacturing system compared with large-scale industry of our time."¹

This position differs cardinally from that of crude egalitarian communism. A failure to understand the role of the material and technical basis in the emergence of communist society, and hence attempts to base communist relations on pre-industrial forms of production, on artisan technology, is typical of the ideology of crude egalitarian communism. It will be noted that some representatives of the crude egalitarian trend of the 18th century (Mably, Maréchal) denounced the use of machines in general and in the future ideal society in particular, which stemmed from their inability to separate machine technology *per se* from the contradictions arising out of its capitalist application—a failure highly characteristic of the early stages of the workers' movement. A desire to guard the patriarchal traditions of the peasant "communal communism" against corruptive influences also played its part in forming this attitude.

Even the more far-sighted ideologists of "undeveloped communism" (Babeuf, Cabet) did not regard machine industry and a technical and economic base as indispensable for communism, although they were able to see in machines a means of lightening labour and increasing the production of material goods.

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 92.

This narrow outlook was, as a rule, the result of the general immaturity of the economic conditions of the epoch. The appearance of similar views in the second half of the 20th century, in the era of the great scientific and technological revolution, is not merely an anachronism or the result of ignorance, it is a highly reactionary trend which is in crying contradiction to the absolutely clearly expressed requirements of social development. This approach has been adopted by the Maoists and is an aspect of the general voluntarist course which the Maoist leadership openly proclaimed in 1958.

Instead of basing their analysis on the real objective requirements of social life and thereby serving as a powerful vehicle of progress, politics has assumed, in effect, a voluntarist character. Politics was enthroned as a "command force", a "marshal" while the economy was left to act only as an "executive soldier" obediently carrying out orders handed down to it.

The grave consequences of the Maoists' disdain for the material and technical basis of social development became particularly evident during the "great leap forward". The widely publicized "great and universal leap forward" in the sphere of production and socio-economic relations was attempted at a time when the level of industry was still extremely low.

It was on this shaky, unstable basis that the Peking "ultra-revolutionaries" intended to build a "golden bridge to communism". However, as developments showed, the "bridge to communism" adorned with the "three red banners" could lead only to economic catastrophe. Dislocation and serious disproportions in the economy, the straining to the limit of all material, financial and human resources, and an overall decline in the living standard of the working people were the consequences of Maoism's adventu-

rist line and utter disregard for the fundamental principles of scientific communism.

The voluntarist approach to the problems of communist society was closely linked with a unilaterally negative attitude towards capitalism. The founders of the ideology of crude egalitarian communism saw capitalism as merely a "knot of contradictions" and denied it the right to existence. They refused to even raise the question of showing "the birth of the new society out of the old".¹ Everything connected with the past was to be condemned as irrational and rejected as rubbish. These views reflected the working people's centuries-old hatred of the exploitative system, their categorical rejection of it, their reaction to the existing social antagonisms. But a truly scientific approach must not be limited to the sphere of immediate and superficial reactions. It must go incomparably farther. Marxism disclosed, more fully and penetratingly than its predecessors, the entire system of antagonisms of the capitalist system and their roots which they saw in the relationships of the productive forces and relations of production. It showed how in the course of its development capitalism creates the prerequisites for the socialist mode of production. The founders of Marxism stressed that while destroying the exploitative relations of the past, socialism must assimilate all that is progressive in what mankind has done in the preceding epochs. Marx and Engels wrote that "a great social revolution shall have mastered the results of the bourgeois epoch, the market of the world and the modern powers of production."² Criticizing the hideboundness and limitations of

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 425.

² K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 499.

crude egalitarian communism, Marx pointed out that communist society presupposes "embracing the entire wealth of previous development".¹

The narrow approach of crude egalitarian communism led to a peculiar but not unexpected paradox: because of its categorically negative attitude towards capitalism, crude egalitarian communism remained (as we shall show further on) captive to a whole number of contradictions inherent in bourgeois society.

The calls for "throwing overboard" everything connected with the past are particularly intense and persistent during revolutionary upheavals and the break-up of exploitative relations. Such "ultra-revolutionary" nihilistic tendencies confronted the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during the transition to socialist construction. Lenin patiently explained the harmfulness of such views to the socialist cause. "We must organize economic life", he insisted, "on a new and more perfect basis, counting on and utilizing all the achievements of capitalism. Without this we shall never be able to build socialism and communism."² "We must take the entire culture that capitalism left behind and build socialism with it. We must take all its science, technology, knowledge and art."³ "Proletarian culture must be the logical development of the store of knowledge mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist, landowner and bureaucratic society."⁴

These theses are highly relevant today. They show up the errors of the Maoists and their followers from the ultra-leftist circles of the Western intelligentsia.

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 90.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 507.

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. 29, p. 70.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 287.

Although the Maoist leadership is, at present, far from scorning contact with the governments of capitalist countries, extensive propaganda aimed against all manifestations of "bourgeois culture", which reached its apogee during the "cultural revolution", continues to play an important role in Chinese ideological doctrine and is conducted in crude and distorted forms.

By playing on the anti-capitalist sentiments of the toiling masses, which have been exploited for centuries and are illiterate for the most part, Maoism tries to justify its policy of "reliance on one's own forces", which dooms the country to backwardness, and to whip up chauvinism among the masses. This policy also serves the aims of anti-Sovietism: denouncing the USSR as a "social-imperialist state", the Maoists seek to belittle the Soviet Union's experience and achievements and present them as irrelevant to China.

The overestimation of the role of the personality in history, which was, on the whole, highly characteristic of the ideologists of utopian socialism, is also linked with disregard for the objective prerequisites needed to build the new society. The various utopian theories were regarded by their authors as the result of their own brilliant insight and as capable of leading mankind onto the true path. In their opinion, "if pure reason and justice have not, hitherto, ruled the world, this has been the case only because men have not rightly understood them. What was wanted was the individual man of genius, who has now arisen and who understands the truth. That he has now arisen, and the truth has now been clearly understood, is not an inevitable event, following of necessity in the chain of historical development, but a mere happy accident. He might just as well have been born 500 years earlier and might have

spared humanity 500 years of error, strife and suffering.”¹

Many ideologists of crude egalitarian communism tried to play the prophet. This is particularly true of Weitling. Here is Engels’ characterization of Weitling in the 1840s: “He was no longer the naive young journeyman-tailor who, astonished at his own talents, was trying to clarify in his own mind just what a communist society would look like. He was now the great man, persecuted by the envious on account of his superiority, who scented rivals, secret enemies and traps everywhere—the prophet, driven from country to country, who carried a recipe for the realization of heaven on earth ready-made in his pocket, and who was possessed by the idea that everybody intended to steal it from him.”²

Weitling’s megalomania left a certain imprint on the rules of the League of the Just; Marx and Engels joined the League on the condition “that everything tending to encourage superstitious belief in authority was to be removed from the status”. Superstitious worship of authority was always deeply alien to the founders of Marxism-Leninism as contradicting the very spirit of scientific communism, which is creative and anti-dogmatic. There is not a trace of Marxism in the cult of blind worship of Mao’s personality that we are witnessing in China today. This cult assumes monstrous, utterly absurd forms and is highly reminiscent of the adoration of emperors in ancient China. The most pretentious claims of the founders of crude egalitarian communism are modest in comparison.

After a visit to Maoist China, the great Chilean

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 117.

² *Karl Marx. A Biography*, Moscow, 1973, p. 111.

poet Pablo Neruda wrote bitterly: "In every street, on every door you see Mao Tse-tung's portrait. Mao Tse-tung has become a living Buddha, separated from the people by court bonzes who interpret Marxism and contemporary history in accordance with his wishes. Peasants bow and kneel before the leader's portrait. Is this communism? It seems more like ridiculous, reprehensible, mystical worship which has nothing in common with the principles of true Marxism in the toga of which the 'great helmsman' tries to wrap himself up."

CHAPTER III

THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY IN CRUDE EGALITARIAN COMMUNISM

The system of crude egalitarian communism was based theoretically on the principle of equality, which it considered the rock-bottom of the ideal system and in relation to which all other social relations were said to be derivative. "The prime cause of all the vices and all the misfortunes of all societies from the beginning of the world," declared the utopian socialists, "is inequality, and hence the remedy against them is the abolition of inequality and the re-making of society on the basis of equality."

This attitude was a reaction to the social inequality which reigned everywhere and the diverse manifestations of which constantly confronted the working people. No matter how low the level of development of the exploitative society, and no matter what fetish was made of the system of its relations, social inequality invariably was the most obvious expression of social antagonisms.

Heinrich Heine wrote of communist propaganda in France in the mid-1840s that it used a language understandable to the people, the elements of which were as simple as the concepts of hunger or death. Also understandable the demand for equality, thrown up by the spontaneous movement of the people, expressing their antagonism for the existing social system.

Another typical feature of the crude egalitarian idea of equality, which has been reproduced at all the stages of its development, is a failure to under-

stand that forms of equality are historically determined and connected with the economic base of society. It was believed simply that "equality will triumph because it is justice and reason, because its triumph is a law of nature".¹ This interpretation of equality as some primary determining principle gives the social factor a dominant position in relation to economics. The whole system of economic interconnections of communist society is thus regarded as something secondary in relation to the extratemporal principle of "perfect equality" determined by nature and reason.

It is a gross distortion of the truth on the part of bourgeois and revisionist ideologists to identify such concepts of equality with Marxism. For it was precisely Marxism which overcame the narrowness of preceding social thought with its idealistic interpretation of equality, and showed the links between ideology and the material basis, and ascertained the primacy of the economic factor in this interconnection.

The principles of the historical materialistic approach to the problem of freedom formulated by Marx can be also applied to the problem of equality: "People won freedom for themselves each time to the extent that was dictated and permitted not by their ideal of man, but by the existing productive forces. All conquests of freedom hitherto, however, have been based on restricted productive forces. The production which these productive forces could provide was insufficient for the whole of society and made development possible only if some persons satisfied their needs at the expense of others, and therefore some—the minority—obtained the monopoly of development, while others—the majority—owing to

¹ E. Cabet, *Voyage en Icarie*, Paris, 1842, p. 460.

the constant struggle to satisfy their most essential needs, were for the time being (i.e., until the birth of new revolutionary productive forces) excluded from any development."¹ Marxism showed that the building of a classless society and the abolition of all forms of social inequality not only represented a break with the entire system of antagonistic relations of the past, but was also a logical result of the entire preceding development of mankind.

Surveying this problem historically, the founders of Marxism proved that social equality in the primitive communal system, where the level of the productive forces was extremely low, was a necessary condition for the existence of human society. When production created no economic surplus and could provide people only with a subsistence minimum, economic exploitation of any part of society would lead to its physical extinction and to the break-up of the social whole into smaller units which would be unable to withstand the forces of nature. However, with the development of individually used instruments of labour and the appearance of surplus product, primitive equality became a brake on economic progress and had to be replaced by a system of antagonistic relations. Over the subsequent historical epochs these relations provided a framework for the development of the productive forces. While the means of production were primitive creating only a very insignificant quantity of surplus product the most rapacious form of exploitation of the mass of producers—slavery, where the slaves were deprived of elementary human rights and turned into "talking tools"—was inevitable. In the period of feudalism the increased level of the productive forces made it necessary

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1964, p. 475.

for all labourers to be economically interested in the results of their labour. The new social situation thus provided the conditions for the increased reproduction of labour power and extended the sphere of the personal freedom of the exploited class, abolishing the absolute power of the owner and the individual's absolute dependence on him. Under capitalism, the productive forces broke the narrow bounds of subsistence economy and led to the formation of national and world markets, making imperative the complete abolition of personal dependence and the guaranteeing of the civic equality of all members of society as juridically free contractors in the capitalist commodity economy.

The highest stage of this process—the abolition of the class division of society and of the attendant forms of social inequality—can only be achieved in conditions of mature communist relations based on highly developed social production.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism repeatedly stressed the untenability of the calls for establishing "perfect equality" on the basis of undeveloped productive forces. Analyzing the demands for social equality put forward in the course of the peasant-pelebeian movement of the Middle Ages, Engels noted their revolutionizing role in stirring the popular masses and drawing them into the struggle against feudalism. At the same time Engels pointed out that in their content these programmes were of an utopian character and that it would be coercing reality to attempt to carry them through. This demand for social equality was "the spontaneous reaction against the crying social inequalities... as such it is simply an expression of the revolutionary instinct, and finds its justification in that, and in that only."¹

¹ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1962, p. 147

Stressing that the viability and progressive character of the principle of equality directly depended on the level and character of social production, Engels wrote in the mid-1870s: "Only at a certain level of development of the productive forces of society, an even very high level for our modern conditions, does it become possible to raise production to such an extent that the abolition of class distinctions can be a real progress, can be lasting without bringing about stagnation or even decline in the mode of social production."¹

Recognising all the complexity of this problem, Marxism shows that the satisfaction of the proletarian demand for equality is, even under communism, not an instantaneous act but a complex historical process.

Since they failed, as a rule, to see the development of the principle of equality under different social systems, the ideologists of crude egalitarian communism could not, of course, apply the method of historicism to the communist system. They did not associate the possibility of establishing perfect equality with definite objective prerequisites and regarded the transition from capitalism to communism as a purely quantitative process of the spread of communist relations to all spheres of social life. The idea of the deep-seated internal evolution of the specific relations of the new society on the basis of development of the productive forces could not be grasped by the metaphysical thinking of the ideologists of "primitive equality".

Marx formulated and introduced the thesis on the stages of communist development corresponding to the different stages of the attainment of social equa-

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Moscow, 1969, p. 387.

lity. He stressed in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* that the full realization of the proletarian demand for equality was possible only given a complex of conditions arising at the higher phase of communist society. The first phase, socialism, inevitably retains certain forms of social inequality, although it signifies a qualitatively new stage in extending the sphere of social equality. Having abolished private ownership and ensured an equal relation of all members of society to the means of production, socialism must eliminate the exploitation of man by man, measure the social value of everyone by the common criterion—socially useful labour, pay equal wages for equal work, guarantee equal political rights and establish equal duties for all citizens. In view of the insufficient development of the system of social production, socialism distributes products, not in accordance with needs, but in accordance with labour done and preserves a differentiation in remuneration depending on the qualification and individual capabilities of the worker. The inequality of material conditions of life is increased by difference in the composition of families, by virtue of which, "with an equal performance of labour, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on". Marx noted, however, that "these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society."¹

It is noteworthy that this highly important aspect of the theory of scientific communism was dealt with in detail by Lenin in his book *The State and Revolution*

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 19.

lution, written on the eve of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Embarking upon socialist construction, the Communist Party rejected as utopian the demand of the various leftist elements to introduce instantly maximally complete equality and, specifically, to abandon, for this purpose, the policy of differentiated wages.

The groundless allegations that any forms of social inequality, including those inevitably inherent in socialism and not connected with antagonistic class relations, are evidence of the exploitative character of the given system, are actively cultivated by all kinds of leftist critics of the Soviet Union and especially by the Maoists, who refer to this to prove the "capitalist" nature of the Soviet state and the "revisionist" character of its policy.

The voluntarist approach to the problem of inequality always involves extremely dangerous ideas about the very content of this concept. The desire instantly to achieve "complete equality" on the basis of immature productive forces was bound to produce, on the widest scale, crude egalitarianism and lay an imprint of asceticism and strict regimentation on the entire system of "ideal" social relations. These phenomena are directly interconnected, and the danger of these tendencies must be kept in mind, in particular when analyzing the programmes of some leftist (as a rule, pro-Maoist) groups in developing countries.

The founders of Marxism quite clearly formulated the essence of a genuinely proletarian concept of equality: "The real content of the proletarian demand for equality is the demand for the *abolition of classes*. Any demand for equality which goes beyond that, of necessity passes into absurdity."¹

¹ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1962, pp. 147-48.

Analyzing the draft of the Gotha Programme, advanced by a part of German Social-Democracy in 1875, Engels pointed out that “‘The elimination of *all* social and political inequality’ is also a very questionable phrase in place of ‘the abolition of all class distinctions’”.¹ (Emphasis added.) Explaining his position, Engels wrote that not all forms of social distinctions will disappear even under communism; in particular, there will remain definite differences in the way of life of people arising from the specifics of the geographical conditions, historical traditions, etc. “Between one country and another, one province and another and even one locality and another there will always exist a *certain* inequality in the conditions of life, which it will be possible to reduce to a minimum but never entirely remove. Alpine dwellers will always have different conditions of life from those of people living on plains.”² Stressing the same idea, Marx noted in *Critique of the Gotha Programme*: “Instead of the indefinite concluding phrase of the paragraph, ‘the elimination of all social and political inequality’, it ought to have been said that with the abolition of class distinctions all social and political inequality *arising from them* would disappear of itself.”³ (Emphasis added.) Inordinately vague interpretations of equality were always alien to scientific communism, and it resolutely rejected them.

In contrast to Marxism, crude egalitarian communism, striving to break the narrow bounds of bourgeois formal legal equality and advancing the categorical demands for “absolute” “perfect” and

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 294.

² *Ibid.*, p. 294.

³ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 24.

“complete” equality, carried these demands for social equality beyond the spheres connected with the abolition of classes, extending them in absurd attempts to level out the personal capabilities and requirements of people. These aims (reflected, in particular, in Marechal’s slogan, “Let there be no difference between people other than the difference of sex and age”), were clearly indicative of the petty-bourgeois extremism and narrow-mindedness of crude communism still influenced by the idea of private property. The petty-bourgeois tendencies of crude egalitarian communism which are indissolubly linked with the specific nature of its socio-economic basis are thus manifest in its interpretation of this central problem. Here one clearly sees the historical connection with the traditions of communal communism and the agrarian-egalitarian demands of the peasantry. Undeveloped communism adopted, as an integral component, the petty-bourgeois idea of equality as total levelling of all and everything. This interpretation, directly connected with private property relations, is particularly characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie. While big capital seeks boundless expansion, the petty proprietor, with his few and limited possibilities and constant fear of his expanding competitors, dreams of reducing the whole world to his wretched level and to preserve this status for ever. According to Marx, “The thought of every piece of private property as such is *at least* turned against *wealthier* private property in the form of envy and the urge to reduce things to a common level, so that this envy and urge even constitute the essence of competition. Crude communism is only the culmination of this envy and of this levelling-down proceeding from the *preconceived* minimum. It has a *definite, limited* standard.”¹

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 88.

The typically petty-bourgeois ideal of society wherein, as Rousseau put it, everyone would possess something and no one would possess anything superfluous, was seized upon, developed and made part of crude egalitarian communism. And since the principle of equality was the starting point and the theoretical core of the whole system the tendencies of petty-bourgeois egalitarianism were fully reproduced in the treatment of all aspects of social and economic relations permeating the entire ideology of crude egalitarian communism and even finding reflection in its name.

Considering the fact that the outwardly broadest and most democratic demands for "complete", "perfect" equality, reflecting, in fact, a despotic petty-bourgeois narrow-mindedness, strongly influenced not only the petty-bourgeois masses but also backward sections of the proletariat, playing on highly sensitive strings of their social consciousness, Marxism not only demanded an exceedingly careful and clear-cut approach to the concept of equality (especially when it was the question of programmatic party documents), but criticized the exaggeration of the role of the principle of equality and its absolutization. "The idea that equality is an expression of justice, the principle of a perfect political and social system, arose quite historically," Engels notes, and it is no accident that "the demand for *equality*... predominated in all French revolutionary socialism from Babeuf to Cabet and Proudhon". However, "equality exists only within the framework of antithesis to inequality, and justice, only within the framework of antithesis to injustice, and hence antithesis to preceding history and consequently the old society itself still weighs down upon these concepts."

Criticizing the metaphysical interpretation of equality as an eternal truth which has at all times

reflected and will reflect the immediate demands of the working people, Engels emphasized the limitations of this principle from the standpoint of the broad historical perspective. "After several generations of social development under communism accompanied by the multiplication of resources, people must reach a stage where the demands for equality and right will appear as laughable as today's conceit with nobiliary and other hereditary privileges."

Such notions about equality were often imputed to Marxism. In March 1905, the State Chancellor of Germany, Bernhard Bülow, accused the Social-Democrats of an intention to establish "universal levelling". Gloomy pictures of a "socialist" society where the principle of equality was carried to an absurdity arise from the pages of pamphlets that appeared in Britain, the United States and other countries. The bourgeoisie persistently strove to persuade the masses that "this was what socialism was really like".

In the period of socialist construction in the USSR the rejection by the Communist Party of the principles of vulgar egalitarianism was often denounced by Left opportunists as "betrayal of Marxism".

In the present epoch Maoism is acting as the successor to and continuer of these anti-Marxist insinuations. In pursuit of its great-power, militarist aims the Maoist dictatorship actively encourages the egalitarian sentiments of the Chinese peasantry which stem from the centuries of backwardness and misery and the corresponding traditions of patriarchal collectivism.

It is noteworthy, however, that despite its calls for "complete" and "universal" equality, the ruling Maoist military-bureaucratic elite evinces no intention of reducing the position of, let us say, those employed in the privileged war industry branches and scien-

tific establishments, to the low living standard of the bulk of the working people. Instead, the principles of levelling are widely employed in rationing consumption for the mass of people and maintaining a general living standard near the subsistence level. Egalitarian tendencies became an integral element of the policy of militarizing all aspects of socio-economic life in China. Demagogic calls for "genuine" equality were assigned an important role in efforts to find an ideological rationale for the Maoists' struggle against overt or potential opponents of the regime. They were used as a cover for the mass removal of the Party and state cadres during the "cultural revolution", the forcible settling of intellectuals and workers in remote rural localities, etc. Seeking to implant the principles of "barracks communism", to introduce forcible levelling in the material and spiritual spheres of the life of society, Maoism ends up on the same side as frank anti-communism, providing a material embodiment of its grotesque, caricature depictions of communist society.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC VIEWS OF CRUDE EGALITARIAN COMMUNISM

1. PROPERTY

Criticism of private property by reference to the principle of "community of properties" was a central feature of communist ideology from its inception. Condemning the exploitative system, it denounced "the fatal institution of private property" as the source of inequality, as the prime cause of all social ills. This criticism was levelled as a rule, from the moralist position characteristic of crude egalitarian communism, which saw private property as an "open door" to brutal passions and pernicious vices corroding society and diverting mankind from the path of reason.

This sharp criticism of private property, however immature its forms, was of vast, fundamental importance at that time. It was, above all, in this that pre-proletarian ideology differed from the classical petty-bourgeois egalitarian theories which advanced, as the basis, equal possession of private property and championed the illusory "socialism of the equality of small proprietors". Early communism went farther than the petty-bourgeois utopia of Rousseau with his calls for levelling the extremes of the property status and increasing the number of proprietors through an egalitarian "new redivision of property". The ideologists of crude egalitarian communism who advocated "universal community" tried to overcome also the

limitations of peasant "communal communism" with its group ownership.

However, while paying due tribute to the founders of crude egalitarian communism, one cannot pass over in silence the fact that the immaturity of their concept of property was potentially highly dangerous. The root cause of this immaturity was the absence of an historical materialistic approach to the problem of property, a failure to understand its dependence on the level and character of development of the productive forces.

Dangerous trends made themselves felt in the treatment of different aspects of property, and in particular the vague idea about its structure and the role of its components. The demand for "community of properties" advanced by the proponents of utopian communism was of a vague, diffuse character and was not developed into an understanding of the decisive role of socializing the means of production. The principle of "community of properties" dated back to early Christianity and was originally understood as community of consumption. This redistribution of the available means of consumption among the members of the Christian community involved, as a rule, common repasts and charitable actions. The followers of the sectarian "heretical communism" in the Middle Ages understood "community of properties" in the same way. It was only in the 16th century, beginning with Moore's and Campanella's utopias, that the demand for "community of properties" overstepped the narrow bounds of consumerism and began to include also community of production.

However, while declaring that under communism "all property has one owner: it belongs to the people", and that "all the good things of life are public property and constitute a single social capital", the

theoreticians of early communism could not single out the means of production as an independent, let alone decisive, element of property. Marx was the first to formulate the concept of means of production as the decisive element of property, showing that the means of production (i.e., the totality of the objects of labour and the instruments of labour with which the objects of labour are acted upon) constitute the material basis of the process of production. The entire system of economic and social relations of a given society depends on what class possesses this material basis of production. Therefore Marx and Engels regarded socialization of the means of production as the decisive factor for socialist change, saying that the resolution of antagonisms through a new organization of society implied, as a necessary condition, the transfer of all the means of production into the ownership of society and that "the workers' parties of all countries in the world briefly summarize their demand for economic transformation: the appropriation of the means of production by society."¹

Marx and Engels insisted on the socialization of the means of production, but they opposed the abolition of private ownership of articles of personal use to which some representatives of early communism were inclined. Formulating the fundamental principles of scientific communism, Marx and Engels wrote in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: "The distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property,"² i.e., property on the basis of which capital appropriates the unpaid labour of workers.

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 188.

² *Ibid.*, p. 120.

"We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products of labour, an appropriation that is made for the maintenance and reproduction of human life, and that leaves no surplus wherewith to command the labour of others. All that we want to do away with, is the miserable character of this appropriation."¹

The existence of personal property designed for individual or family use does not at all contradict public socialist or communist ownership as some "ultra-revolutionaries" contend. Personal property under socialism is not a source of income but the result of labour in social production and the product of the functioning of the national economy based on public ownership. The size of personal property depends, in the final analysis, on the level of social production.

Glossing over fundamental differences between private capitalist property and the personal property of working people has become an element of the Maoist policy (communization). While establishing "people's communes" under the slogan of "the final abolition of the survivals of private property" the Maoists attempted to socialize the personal property of the peasants, right up to household articles such as kitchen utensils. By so doing they did a good service to bourgeois propaganda, for what they were actually doing was to provide practical proof of one of its stock anti-communist arguments. The levelling the Maoists sought to establish through such forms of forcible socialization has nothing in common with communist equality. It undermines objectively necessary stimuli to the development of production, restricts individual requirements and perpetuates that "miserable character of appropriation" which the founders of Marxism opposed.

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1969, p. 121.

Their unscientific, primitive notions about property, their inability to reduce it to the ultimate material basis prevented the crude communists from understanding objective historical interconnections of different forms of property. While bourgeois theoreticians declared private property to be an "eternal" and "natural" category, the representatives of early communism (who did not understand its historically determined character either) believed that it owed its origin to unfortunate accidents such as deceit, violence, conspiracies and delusions. Following Rousseau, Cabet termed the "invention" of private property mankind's most grievous mistake.

Transcending the one-sidedness of bourgeois and primitive communist views, Marxism showed, by the method of materialist dialectics, that private property is both objectively determined and historically finite, that "human life required *private property* for its realization... and it now requires the suppression of *private property*",¹ and that a profound scientific analysis of private property is needed in order to prove that it is doomed historically, that it "drives itself in its economic movement towards its own dissolution".² As Engels stressed, in order to judge of communism something more is required than to see its core or, more simply, the abolition of private property. A person cannot have the slightest idea of the *consequences* which the abolition of private property can have if he does not know its prerequisites either. Showing that at a definite historical stage private capitalist property opened up wide possibilities for the development of the productive forces and created

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 117.

² K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family*, Moscow, 1956, p. 52.

objective conditions for socialist transformation, Marx criticized crude egalitarian communism for its inability to grasp the positive essence of private property. It was in connection with the problem of property that Marx posed the question of historical continuity between socialism and capitalism. He showed that the actual abolition of private property and of the relations connected with it presupposed the assimilation, on a new basis, of all the achievements of previous development.

Marx and Engels did not limit themselves to demanding the establishment of public ownership. They consistently argued that the consolidation of public ownership and appropriate socio-economic relations would be possible only on the basis of well-developed large-scale industry.

In his polemic against the "Left Communists", Lenin said, pointing to the need for "*socializing production in practice*",¹ that nationalization and confiscation as legal acts did not yet ensure genuine socialization, and that "even the greatest possible 'determination' in the world is not enough to pass *from nationalization and confiscation to socialization*".² What is needed is a high level of development of the productive forces which, improving and extending the system of social division of labour, increase the production inter-dependence between individual enterprises and securely unite all economic links into a single economic whole. Socialist socialization also requires a complex economic mechanism which makes it possible for the working people to control the production and distribution of material benefits on a nationwide scale. To achieve genuine socialist socialization is a formidable task, especially for eco-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 241.

² *Ibid.*, p. 333.

nominally backward countries. Attempts to speed up its implementation by administrative order are fraught with dire consequences.

2. LABOUR

The theories of early communism proclaimed "community of labour" as an essential factor in achieving "perfect equality". In expounding the meaning of this concept the principle of universality of labour was quite justifiably advanced to the foreground: this was an expression of the centuries-old resentment of the working people against the parasitism of the ruling class, the desire to redistribute more evenly the burdens of labour (the working day often lasted 14-16 hours in the period of the rise of capitalism).

How was the universality of labour to be ensured under crude egalitarian communism? It was to be a universal civic duty, enforced by special laws chastising idleness, and by constant public control. "No one can avoid labour without committing a crime," proclaimed Babeuf, who demanded capital punishment for evasion of compulsory labour.

Expressing the wish that labour under communism be "attractive as far as possible" and a source of emotional and physical enjoyment, the advocates of primitive equality, Cabet among them, also placed emphasis on the need to regard labour as a "social tax". While justly demanding that under communism everyone should work "commensurably with his powers, endowments and age", i.e., essentially according to ability, they did not concentrate attention on the necessity of creating the complex of objective prerequisites for the fullest possible self-realization of every individual in the process of social labour, but,

instead, stressed the idea of strict obligation. For instance, the Babouvists formulated this principle as the need to *compel* all able-bodied citizens to work, each in accordance with his ability and skills.

Marxism does not deny that administrative methods play a definite role in involving the masses of people in labour activity, especially in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism and (although already to a much smaller extent) under socialism. Quoting Marx, Lenin emphasized that people would not learn at once to work for society without legal compulsions. He noted on the margin of *Critique of the Gotha Programme* that the formula "he who does not work, neither shall he eat" was "also a form of compulsion". However, as distinct from crude egalitarian communists, who regard administrative-legal methods of ensuring the universality of labour as integral to the most "perfect" and "rational" society, Marxism considers them to be a transitional measure leading to society where labour must become the first need of man, where external inducements to labour will disappear completely. Lenin stressed that in the higher phase of communism there would be no compulsion connected with labour, for man would work without enforcements.

The ideologists of crude egalitarian communism, beginning with Morelly and the Babouvists, formulated an extremely clear idea of the centralized regulation of the economy—this was a reaction to the "economic individualism" of bourgeois society, designed as a way of ensuring strict, all-embracing levelling on a nationwide scale. "It is in the common interest," they said, "that the right to regulate the distribution of property and the labour that creates it should belong to society." However, the interpretation of this thesis, the very formulation of which was of fundamental importance in the development of communist

ideas, bore the imprint of a "limited measure" and strict obligation with respect to every individual. In conditions of the domination of principles of "absolute equality", under an undeveloped system of social division of labour lacking a flexible mechanism for harmonising individual and social interests, the centralized distribution of labour power would often develop into petty and rigid regimentation of all man's activity from birth to death.

Marxism rejects this inordinate extension of administrationism and these attempts to squeeze man's activity into a detailed pre-set scheme. The founders of Marxism-Leninism maintained that communist society should provide man with the widest opportunities to make an independent choice of his social and economic activity and forms of his individual being which would ensure the fullest possible development of his capabilities and at the same time accord with the interests of society as a whole. Systematic regulation of the distribution of manpower among branches of the economy must not take the form of direct administrative compulsion. It must be accompanied by the closest possible co-ordination of the interests of the individual and society, with the use of an extensive and flexible system of incentives in which an important role is assigned under socialism, to economic incentives. The proponents of crude egalitarian communism considered that after the abolition of private ownership only two types of public control over labour activity would be possible: administrative-legal control, and control by moral norms, with the use of different forms of moral encouragement. It is to their credit that the authors of early communist theories elaborated on this latter, fundamentally new aspect of economic activity.

Moral incentives do acquire exceptional importance with the abolition of the exploitation of man by

man, when labour for the good of society determines one's social standing and prestige. In the first years of Soviet power, Lenin noted that the labour enthusiasm of the masses working for themselves and their society reflected the emergence of a new, communist attitude towards labour and was a powerful factor in socialist construction.

However, in the system of crude egalitarian communism the role of the moral factor in economic activity was, on the whole, overestimated both as a result of complete disregard for material encouragement and by virtue of an excessively idyllic picture of the relations between the individual and society when the principle of "absolute equality" would be predominant. Proposing regulation of labour activity through balancing administrative and moral factors, some ideologists of crude egalitarian communism considered that in cases of particularly arduous work, when an influx of conscientious volunteers could not be counted on, administrative measures should develop into direct militarization of labour. Morelly held, for instance, that it should be strictly obligatory for all citizens between the ages of 20 and 25 to go to the countryside and to work there in military-type units.

Such a solution of the problem is alien to scientific communism, which understands that the utmost development of the productive forces will eliminate the need for arduous types of labour. Where they still remain under socialism, moral encouragement must be actively backed up with appropriate material inducements.

Trotskyism attempted to impose on the Soviet state militarized methods of labour organization which were typical of crude egalitarian communism. Insisting on administrative measures of compulsion to draw the masses into economic activity, Trotskyists

urged following a "line of intimidation" and advocated militarization of labour as a necessary and "natural" factor in socialist construction.

Trying to provide theoretical grounds for his line, Trotsky declared cynically that since, "as a general rule, man tries to evade labour, it may be said then, that he is a rather lazy animal." From this was inferred the need for the strictest militarization of labour under which every workman would feel a soldier of a single army of labour.

Administrative militarized measures were to be supplemented with "shock work," i.e., growth of labour productivity owing to labour enthusiasm, although the overall Trotskyist policy would inevitably deprive this enthusiasm of its source. The Communist Party with Lenin at the head gave battle to Trotsky's proposals. Lenin showed that the realization of the Trotskyist policy would alienate the masses of working people from the Party, jeopardize the power of the proletariat and implant inefficient methods of economic management.

Maoism is taking up this Trotskyist line. Having proclaimed their "policy of the three red banners", envisaging ambitious voluntarist plans for "accelerated communist construction", and then pursuing, ever more energetically, a military hegemonic line, Maoism has placed its stakes on administrative coercive methods of managing the economy with the use of certain moral factors based on the manipulation of mass consciousness in the spirit of the ideas of the "great helmsman". The primitive, crudely administrative non-economic methods of tackling highly complicated economic problems led to direct militarization of labour. "Steel smelting armies", "paramilitary transport columns" were essential attributes of the adventuristic "great leap forward" practice. "People's communes" became a form of or-

ganization of mass forced labour using mobile labour units cemented by rigid military discipline.

In carrying out the "cultural revolution" Maoism openly set on a course of directly militarizing all aspects of socio-economic life, proclaiming that "the whole country learns from the army, the whole people are soldiers". Experience showed the fallaciousness of this policy. For the political tension in the country was aggravated and the practice of labour armies, publicized as "the shock force," proved to be a very inefficient method of utilizing labour power, especially in modern conditions, because it is based on the co-operation of unskilled manual labour and cannot interest the workers in the results of social production.

Another characteristic feature of crude egalitarian communism is its treatment of the problem of physical and mental labour, in which it still finds followers and adherents. The theoreticians of utopian communism advanced, as an indispensable condition for achieving "genuine equality", the essentially correct idea of the elimination of social distinctions between physical and mental labour (although they did not formulate this idea precisely enough). However, as distinct from the ideologists of Marxism, they saw the solution of this formidable problem, not in the utmost development of the productive forces which ousts unskilled manual labour, and not in bringing all the treasures of human culture within the reach of the broad masses of people, but in the universal spread of physical labour supplemented with a certain rise in the general educational level of the whole people.

The possibilities for professional intellectual activity in their "society of equals" were, as a rule, very limited. Thus, according to Morelly and Babeuf, only a small number of the more endowed young

people were to be allowed to specialize in science and the arts under the guidance of a limited and strictly regulated body of tutors. In the name of "complete equality", Morelly demanded that every intellectual serve a term of agricultural labour. Furthermore he advocated a strict limitation of scientific research. In the "perfect society" of the future only the natural and technical sciences were to be developed (to the extent objectively possible within the narrow limits that were established), while creative activity in the sphere of the social sciences was not permitted. Morelly formulated "laws on scientific pursuits designed to prevent wanderings of the human mind and all transcendent dreams". He declared that except moral philosophy treating of the plan and system of laws (laid down by Morelly himself), there should be no other philosophy, and that in the "Code of All Sciences" to be drawn up under communism "nothing transcending the bounds prescribed by laws will ever be added to metaphysics and morality". There is no point, in other words, for mankind to philosophize over the problems of being, when the absolute, indisputable truth already shines forth from the pages of Morelly's *Code of Nature*. Speaking plainly and in a businesslike way, as if of something that goes without saying, Morelly announces that all the points of the laws formulated by him "will be engraved, each separately, on a corresponding number of columns or pyramids erected in the public square of every city."¹

The anti-intellectualist trend found its extreme expression in the calls of Darthé, Debon, Lepelletier, Marechal and other ultra-left Babouvists to destroy sciences and the arts under communism. Invoking the authority of Rousseau, they argued, as he had done, that science and the arts exerted a baneful in-

¹ Morelly, *Code de la nature*, Paris, 1950, p. 322.

fluence on social morality and were incompatible with the principles of equality, and expressed the fear lest people "who have devoted themselves to science should regard actual or supposed knowledge as ground for distinctions, superiority or release from public labour."¹ Thus, science was counterposed to "public labour."

The arts, too, "give rise to predilection for over-indulgence and aversion for simplicity of morals"; not everybody understands them, and those who do become conceited and vainglorious, which also "makes for violation of rights of simpler people". For this reason cultural levelling of society (naturally, at a low level of intellectual development) presents itself as an indisputable social boon. "Let all the arts perish, if necessary; the important thing is that we should preserve genuine equality,"² Marechal proclaimed in his *Manifesto of Equals*. This tendency is as reactionary as it is utopian, for it is impossible to impose a ban on creative production, and important and integral aspects of human activity. Such ideas, however, found many followers among Marx's and Engels's contemporaries, specifically among the members of the French secret society of Egalitarian Workers who, as Engels wrote, "wanted to turn the world into a community of workers, destroying all the refinement of civilization, science, fine arts, etc., as a useless, dangerous and aristocratic luxury".

The nihilistic attitude towards intellectual labour was also evident in Babeuf's denial of any differences in the process of mental and manual labour. This accorded with the Babouvist general tendency to level all types of activity and write off as nonexistent the

¹ F. Buonarrotti, *Conspiration pour l'égalité*, Vol. 1, Paris, 1957, p. 210.

² In the 18th century the term "arts" was used in a very broad sense and was sometimes used to cover the sciences.

economic problem of commensurability of simple and complex labour. "Does not the most uncouth shepherd display, in his work and in upholding his interests, a mind as refined as that Newton needed to discover the laws of gravitation? Everything depends on the object to which our attention is turned,"¹ Babeuf contended.

Of course one cannot deny that for the long historical period when the productive forces are insufficiently developed the social need for, and hence the importance of, unskilled labour remains. Even under socialism unskilled labour is essential and like any socially useful activity, enjoys respect and social prestige. In pre-socialist societies, where there were no possibilities for the intellectual growth of all citizens, a great many talents were given no chance to develop, and the work a man engaged in very often did not accord with his real capabilities and potential.

However, arbitrary assessments equating the labour of an outstanding scientist and an unskilled agricultural labourer will in no way help to put an end to this situation resulting from the immaturity of the productive forces and contradictions in social relations. Moreover, an attempt to do so, undertaken over a long historical period, can only aggravate these conflicts, for violation of the principles of distinguishing between different types of labour undermines efforts to improve the structure of social labour and, in the long run, can only help to perpetuate for generations to come arduous unskilled and uncreative professions.

The discriminatory attitude towards intellectual labour also manifested itself in the social status

¹ F. Buonarroti, *Conspiration pour l'égalité*, Vol. 1, Paris, 1957, p. 29.

assigned to the intelligentsia. In the Babouvist "society of equals" it was much more difficult for mental workers to obtain civil rights than for manual workers. Such an attitude towards intellectual activity differs cardinally not only from the principles of scientific communism, but also from the views of the great utopian socialists. Saint-Simon, who envisioned the future society as a kingdom of enlightenment and science, considered that "successes in the acquisition of knowledge," should receive the highest social recognition in it. "Enough honours to the Alexanders," he proclaimed. "Long live the Archimedese!" As distinct from crude communism, which "wants to disregard talent, etc., in an *arbitrary* manner,"¹ Fourier regarded as the greatest achievement of communist society the large numbers of men of genius which the most progressive social system would produce.

Marx saw in the attitude of the advocates of "absolute equality" towards mental labour, science and culture evidence of crude communism's rejection of the progressive results of previous development, without assimilating which it is impossible to build a genuinely communist society. Marx wrote: "How little this annulment of private property is really an appropriation is in fact proved by the abstract negation of the entire world of culture and civilization . . ."²

On what social and economic factors is the nihilistic attitude of vulgar communism towards mental labour based? This attitude has its objective economic basis in the low level of social production existing at the time when communist ideology was first taking shape. The prevalence of handicraft te-

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 88.

² *Ibid.*, p. 89.

chnology and the accordingly low productivity of labour and limited mass of surplus product resulted in the concentration of the absolute majority of the gainfully employed population in the sphere of material production, which required, in the main, expenditure of physical labour. The concept of a communist society which was not associated with the building of a definite material and technical basis and the realization of which was often regarded as possible in the nearest future naturally reflected the distribution of labour power characteristic of the time. The development of material production in that period was extensive, and putting it within the framework of a communist society was necessarily associated with the involvement of additional physical labour into the sphere of material production.

When the field for professional intellectual activity was restricted, specialization in this activity, especially from the unsophisticated viewpoint of the people engaged in arduous physical labour, could appear to be an unjustified luxury, parasitism of a kind, and evoke a sharply negative reaction. Three main stages can be observed in the development of the social structure of employment in the course of human history. During the first six millennia almost the whole able-bodied population was engaged in the "primary" sphere of economy, directly dealing with objects of nature. As a result of the industrial revolution of the late 18th and early 19th centuries the bulk of the labour force moved into the "secondary" sphere—manufacturing. The current scientific and technological revolution has laid the basis for a tremendous growth of labour productivity, making possible the beginning of the next stage, that of intensive relocation of labour into the "tertiary", non-material sphere—science, education, management, health protection, social services, etc.

The ideology of the pre-proletariat, taking shape at the junction of the first two phases, was oriented, on the whole, not towards the incipient progressive tendencies of social production, but towards the conditions that preceded the domination of machine industry. In all the elements of its theoretical system, the questions of labour included, it reproduced, in some or other shape, the relations of undeveloped forms of production. To be sure, the views of the theoreticians of crude communism could not, as we have already noted, remain entirely unaffected by the processes of the industrial revolution. The Babouvists, and Cabet in particular, foresaw the use of machines under communism, but they did not regard machine industry as the solely possible technical and economic basis for communism, and the objective tendencies of socio-economic development generated by it did not become an integral part of their theoretical system. It is no accident that in Babeuf's list of socially necessary types of labour under communism the first and leading role is assigned to agricultural labour. Nor is it surprising that he opposes redistribution of labour power at the expense of agriculture, is apprehensive of "extensive industry", and calls for strictly limiting the number of trades. Babeuf demands the settlement of citizens predominantly in the countryside, considering that large cities are to disappear in the future. Buonarotti often calls his Republic of Equals an "agrarian state" and its population, an "agrarian nation."¹

¹ Present-day Chinese practice, too, is characterized by emphasis on the countryside and its contraposition to the city. The policy of extolling the role of the village as opposed to the "dominance of the bourgeois city" gained particular intensity in the period of the establishment of "people's communes." The village, and the village alone, is the revolutionary base from which the revolutionaries march to conquer the city, declared

In contradistinction to crude egalitarian communism, Marx and Engels regarded the processes accompanying the development of large-scale machine industry as the basis for understanding the future development of society and proved capable of foreseeing fundamentally important tendencies concerning the role of mental labour in the economically developed society of the future. These tendencies are now evident in the modern scientific and technological revolution. We are witnessing the gradual release, foreseen by Marx, of people from the sphere of material production, a drastic narrowing of the gulf between material and non-material production, and a steady growth of the role of mental labour in all types of production activity. The reactionary nature of the attempt artificially to limit the development of science is seen most clearly now when science is becoming increasingly important as a direct productive force, when the volume of scientific knowledge is growing by leaps and bounds, and prerequisites are being created for production to become an "experimental science, materially creative and materially embodied science". All these factors clearly demonstrate the untenability of crude egalitarian communism in the face of social progress.

The attitude of the proponents of "primitive equality" towards intellectual labour was considerably influenced by the fact that in exploitative societies

the magazine *Hungchi* (No. 10, 1965). In the new historical setting, the anti-urbanist trend characteristic of the utopian communists, while serving definite internal aims of the Maoist regime (weakening the influence of the industrial proletariat and the intelligentsia, and justifying the forcible settlement of remote borderlands, etc.), acquires an obviously anti-Soviet tenor. The Maoists counterpose the "world village", i.e., the "third world" to the "world city", uniting under this aegis both the capitalist states and the Soviet Union and the European socialist countries.

the distinctions between physical and mental labour became antithetic, an expression of class antagonisms. The inability to discriminate between the concrete historical forms of the social division of labour and the objective content of various types of human activity engendered the widespread view fully identifying the exploiters with mental workers and hence a suspicious, hostile attitude towards intellectual activity as such. This feature of crude communism was mentioned by Engels in his characterization of the views of Weitling's followers whom he described as "arch-democrats and extreme equalitarians to the extent of fostering ineradicable suspicion against any schoolmaster, journalist, and any man generally who was not a manual worker as being an 'erudite' who was out to exploit them."¹

These ideas strongly affected the practice of the workers' movement, specifically that part of it which was influenced by the ideas of crude egalitarianism: a suspicious attitude was taken towards communist intellectuals, the limitation or even prohibition of admission of intellectuals into some communist organizations (for instance, the Egalitarian Workers) was practised, and the role of the intelligentsia in elaborating the theoretical foundations of the communist movement was discredited. This last, despite the fact that the majority of the ideologists of crude communism themselves did not come from the proletariat or peasantry. "The theory of socialism, however," Lenin pointed out, "grew out of the philosophic, historical, and economic theories elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals."² The underestimation of the role of the intelligentsia in this question was combined with a nihil-

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Religion*, Moscow, 1955, p. 322.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 375.

listic attitude towards the elaboration of the theoretical problems of communism. Marx and Engels experienced this during the founding of the Communist League, when they came under attack from the Weitlingians.¹

Treating Marx and Engels as doctrinaires divorced from life, Weitling declared that the modest practical work of preparing revolution was much more important than "criticism and armchair analyses of doctrines far away from the suffering people". In a heated argument with Weitling at a meeting of the Brussels Communist Correspondence Committee Marx tossed at him this famous phrase: "Ignorance has never yet helped anybody." At the same time Marx realized that militant ignorance had deep roots, that "ignorance is a demonic force," and was afraid "that it will cause many a tragedy".

The narrow-mindedness of the vulgar communists in interpreting the social functions of brain workers, for which the founders of Marxism criticized them,²

¹ Marx and Engels had to exert considerable efforts to neutralize the influence of the demagogic of Weitling who played on the prejudiced attitude of a part of the workers towards "literati."

² Indicative in this respect is the consistency with which Engels stressed, especially in his later years, the need for drawing representatives of different strata of the intelligentsia and office workers into the socialist movement, referring to the fundamental features and requirements of the socialist revolution. Thus, he urged in his address to the International Congress of Socialist Students: "Let your efforts lead to the students' awareness that it is from their ranks that the proletariat of mental labour shall emerge to play, shoulder to shoulder and in the same ranks with their brothers the manual workers, a significant part in the imminent revolution. What the bourgeois revolutions of the past wanted from the universities was only lawyers as the best raw material from which their politicians were made; the emancipation of the working class will require, in addition, doctors, engineers, chemists, agronomists and

became ever more obvious as the productive forces developed, steadily increasing the objective social need for various types of mental labour and drawing—often through sharp class conflicts—ever broader social strata into this sphere of activity.

The attempts of crude communism to play down and discredit the role of mental labour in the name of the principle of perfect equality, “to disregard talent, etc., in an *arbitrary* manner” (for mankind allegedly “consists of absolutely identical beings”) bears, as Marx noted, the imprint of private-property relations. In this connection the words about social envy constituted as power and representing a camouflaged form of money-grubbing, and about the tendency towards levelling, so characteristic of private property, ring with particular force.

Fear of the free development of the human intellect and the desire to thrust it into a confining mold are inherent in egalitarian communism because also it is an essentially dogmatic theory appealing to faith in its own infallibility rather than to knowledge and practice as the criterion of truth. Dogmatism, Marx noted, is a kind of play at preaching “which assumes an inspired prophet on the one side and on the other only gaping asses”.

These old anti-intellectualist dogmas have found

other specialists, for it is a question of mastering not only the political machine but social production as a whole, and here sound knowledge and by no means high-sounding phrases will be needed”. History has shown the correctness of this line. The tremendous importance Lenin attached to educating a socialist intelligentsia and the insistence with which he stressed, in the post-revolutionary period, the need for drawing bourgeois specialists into socialist construction is well known. “...We need their knowledge, their experience and labour,” he wrote, “without which it is impossible in fact, to gain possession of the culture that was created by the old social relations and has remained as the material basis of socialism.”

embodiment in the practice of the Maoists, assuming barbarous forms which would probably horrify many of the founders of crude egalitarian communism. Bonfires of books, people in fool's caps publically ridiculed and executed—all this is reminiscent of the gloomiest chapters of human history and could hardly be associated with a "kingdom of reason and justice".

Acting in the spirit of crudest egalitarianism, aimed at bringing everyone down to the lowest level, the Maoists "obliterated distinctions" between mental and physical labour. At the end of 1958, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China decreed obligatory participation of all specialists in physical labour. A large number of intellectuals were sent to remote agricultural regions for "re-education through physical labour" and "education by the people". The repression of mental workers on a large scale was an integral part of the "great cultural revolution." At that time the Maoists were advancing a pernicious theory according to which during the period between the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the elimination of all distinctions between mental and physical labour, the intelligentsia as a whole remains a bearer of "anti-socialist tendencies". Professional activity in the sphere of literature and the arts was subjected to every kind of discrimination, and its very right to existence under socialism was called into question.¹

Since the "cultural revolution" Maoism has been at pains forcibly to tear the Chinese people from their remarkable national cultural values and from the treasures of world culture. This tendency still pers-

¹ "The victorious proletariat has no use for professional writers, artists, composers and painters," the *Jenmin jihpao* proclaimed on February 22, 1966.

ists, as is evidenced by the campaign against the "bourgeois" music of Beethoven, Schubert and Debussy. The purpose of lowering the general cultural and educational level of the people was served by the reduction of the term of instruction in school and of the volume of subjects studied, and other similar measures.

The socialist countries, guided by the principles of scientific communism, take the approach that cultural advancement of the whole people is an important condition for the progress of the productive forces, for the growth of the social activity of the working people, and for the refashioning of everyday life. Stressing the need for a genuine proletarian cultural revolution to end the alienation of the masses from culture and to multiply mankind's achievements in the material and cultural spheres, Lenin called on all working people and, above all, the youth to study.

Mao Tse-tung calling himself "true Marxist-Leninist" has declared war upon "excessive knowledge", wrapping up his reactionary theory in outrageous aphorisms such as: "The more books a man reads, the more stupid he becomes." To provide a backing for their obscurantist line, the Maoists try to revive the prejudices against intellectuals that are traditional for an economically, socially and culturally backward country. In doing so they play on the feelings of "social envy", cultivating extremely primitive ideas about "genuine equality". By pursuing its anti-intellectualist policy Maoism is out to strengthen its dictatorship, crush the internal opposition and indoctrinate the masses in order to draw them into dangerous adventurism. The policy of lowering the cultural level of the masses is necessary for implanting and cultivating the Mao cult. This is revealed with utmost frankness in the slogan proclaimed dur-

ing the "cultural revolution": "We do not need brains: our heads are armed with the ideas of Mao Tse-tung".

Mao put forward the utterly anti-scientific, anti-Marxist thesis that the cultural backwardness of the masses facilitates the transition to socialism, for "an illiterate person is highly receptive to new ideas". The Chinese people, Mao declared, is like blank sheet of paper. There is nothing on a blank sheet of paper, but you can write on it the newest, most beautiful words, and draw the newest, most beautiful pictures. These "newest" Maoist "pictures" revive old reactionary aspirations, and the "newest words" conceal a very grim reality.

3. DISTRIBUTION, ECONOMIC INCENTIVES, INTERESTS

Crude communism is against linking the size of material remuneration with the results of individual labour. Two principles of remuneration were advanced: strict egalitarianism (the Babouvists and their followers), and distribution according to needs (Morelly, Cabet, Weitling and others). However, the advocates of this second principle were concerned with regulating and levelling requirements (we shall deal with this later on), and thus they too preached egalitarianism.

The principle of levelling applied to distribution is justified by the need to ensure "absolute equality." "How absurd and unjust it is to demand a greater reward for him whose labour requires a higher intellectual level and greater diligence and mental strain," Babeuf declared categorically. The supporters of crude communism (Villegardelle, Cabet) sharply criticized the socialist principle of distribution put forward by the Saint-Simonists, "From each according

to his ability, to each ability according to its deeds," seeing this as an attempt to establish a "hierarchy of abilities" as a variety of the exploitative system.

To be sure, distribution according to needs, when "*a different form* of activity, of labour, does not justify *inequality, confers no privileges* in respect of possession and enjoyment",¹ is the highest, truly communist form of distribution, and the ideologists of early communism deserve to be remembered in history for having formulated this principle. But they were incapable of realizing what a vast complex of highly involved socio-economic problems had to be solved in order that this principle be implemented. They did not realize that the material basis of this principle lay in vigorous development of the productive forces. Engels wrote: "But strangely enough it has not struck anyone that, after all, the method of distribution essentially depends on *how much* there is to distribute, and that this must surely change with the progress of production and social organization".² In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1964, p. 593.

² K. Marx and F. Engels. *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, p. 415.

needs!”,¹ Marx wrote. When the level of production is low and the possibilities for the growth of social wealth are limited man’s subordination to an undeveloped system of social division of labour, and profound qualitative distinctions between mental and physical labour are preserved, the possibilities for intellectual labour are few and petty regulation restricts all aspects of human life. These conditions are infinitely remote from those which really make possible the realization of the communist principle of distribution according to needs.

While the advocates of intensified realization of “perfect equality” anathemized all inequality in distribution and the Saint-Simonists dissociated themselves from the ideas of crude egalitarianism and absolutized the principle of “to each according to his work”, the founders of Marxism were able to overcome this theoretical contradiction.

Taking a dialectical approach to the analysis of communist society, they showed that distribution according to needs is characteristic of the higher phase of communism, and that distribution according to the quantity and quality of labour is the only possible form of distribution with a lower level of development of the productive forces and an insufficient maturity of the system of communist production relations. Certain inequality as regards the material position,² sanctioned by and born of distribution ac-

¹ K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1970, p. 19.

² Under socialism this inequality is considerably reduced by means of the public consumption funds, which are spent on education, health protection, culture, social security, etc. The payments and benefits received by the working people from these funds do not, as a rule, depend directly on the results of their work. On the whole, the greatest beneficiaries are families with many children or disabled persons and those of low-paid

cording to work, does not blind Marxists to the irreplaceable role of the principle of material stimulation in raising social production and, consequently, in creating the material prerequisites necessary for the transition to distribution according to needs.

As Lenin pointed out, communist construction should be conducted "not directly relying on enthusiasm, but aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal interest, personal incentive and business principles." And he added that "otherwise we shall never get to communism, we shall never bring scores of millions of people to communism".¹

Marxism does not view material, moral, and intellectual factors as mutually exclusive.² It rejects the position of crude egalitarian communism, which held to a one-sided interpretation and the metaphysical contraposition of these factors. While the ideologists of the bourgeoisie glorified material interest as the only possible "natural" motor of social progress, the champions of "primitive equality" contended that the foundations of communism could be built from the bricks of enthusiasm and self-denial alone.

Of course, with the abolition of the system of private property, moral incentives acquire an exceptional and in some historical moments even primary importance. But during the long period when the

workers. In the Soviet Union the share of the public consumption funds in the sum total of social benefits is rising steadily. Between 1960 and 1970 it grew from 26 per cent to about 32 per cent. At the same time, as was stressed in the decisions of the 24th Congress of the CPSU, remuneration for labour must continue to be the main source of the people's growing incomes.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 58.

² "The 'idea' always disgraced itself insofar as it differed from the interest," Marx and Engels wrote in *The Holy Family*, understanding "interest" as material interest.

foundations of a highly developed communist society are being laid they cannot alone ensure the accomplishment of the tasks of communist construction. Besides, one cannot agree with the champions of "absolute equality", that it is possible to employ material incentives to the full on the basis of relations of crude egalitarian communism. Where social production is underdeveloped and cannot provide the mass of working people with interesting work and where all aspects of social life are rigidly regulated, labour cannot be a genuinely free, creative activity.

To ignore the principle of payment in accordance with the quantity and quality of labour means to undermine incentives objectively necessary for raising labour productivity, which in an immature communist society is the highest criterion of the social value of every individual worker. However, crude egalitarian communism is far from calling for the unlimited development of the productive forces. With its advocacy of asceticism, it does not at all consider (as we shall see later) the creation of an abundance of material goods to be the aim of communist production.

Disregard for the connection between the size of material remuneration and the results of individual labour at the lower stage of development of the communist mode of production contradicts the mechanism, necessary at this stage, which co-ordinates the immediate economic interests of individuals with the vital interests of society. However, egalitarian communism does not concern itself with this complex problem, tending as it does to reject personal interests and dissolving them mechanically in the interests of the social whole.

The advocates of "primitive equality" extended their wrathful condemnation of bourgeois individua-

lism to an unwarranted rejection of any personal interest, identifying this with the private property interest. Therefore they considered that "community of properties" should "remove personal interest, submerging it in social interest".

To be sure, the abolition of private ownership of the means of production must place production at the service of the whole of society and hence of each individual member, eliminating private-proprietary stimuli and creating the basis for the coincidence of personal and social interests.

However, under socialism the coincidence of these interests does not dissolve personal in social interests. Personal interests exist under socialism alongside the interests of society as a whole. Human society cannot exist without the individuals that make it up, and social interests cannot be realized otherwise than through the mass activity of people motivated by a definite system of interests. The content of these interests is determined primarily by social processes, but they are also strongly influenced by factors of a personal, individual character. The Marxist understanding of the individual as the individual being of social relations presupposes a combination of social and personal interests motivating the individual.

The tendency to present personal and above all personal economic interests as something alien and even hostile to socialism was current for a long historical period, and the exponents of this view are to be found today. In the period of transition to socialist construction in Russia, the Trotskyists, the Workers' Opposition and other leftist elements categorically rejected material encouragement of labour as a "principle of capitalist production". They contended that a policy of equalization in the sphere of distribution and personal consumption was a normal economic system. Lenin criticized these views as utterly wrong,

showing their inapplicability to socialist construction. In particular, criticizing Trotsky's view that successes in work should only be encouraged morally and not rewarded materially, Lenin wrote: "It is all wrong. The preference part of priority implies preference in consumption as well. Otherwise, priority is a pipe dream, a fleeting cloud, and we are, after all, materialists."¹

Maoism directly continues this pernicious and dangerous course. Egalitarian tendencies in the sphere of distribution and consumption, underestimation and, in some periods, even denial of economic incentives have become part of the Maoist voluntarist policy which thrusts a barrack-like regimen on all aspects of social life. Levelling in distribution has become a means of restricting and rationing at a uniformly low level. This tendency manifested itself most intensively during the "three red banners" and "cultural revolution" periods, when the Maoist leadership was particularly vehement in its criticism of the economic methods of management, denouncing them as evidence of bourgeois "economism" and "egoism". The principle of material encouragement was condemned as severely as it had been by the early advocates of crude egalitarian communism. It was declared to be "a stab in the back of the proletarian revolution", "arsenic in sugar coating", "a birthmark of capitalism", and so on, and so forth. Mao Tse-tung categorically denied the objective need for material incentives under socialism, linking their application exclusively with "underestimation of ideological-political work" and saying that economic activity should be encouraged by raising political consciousness and not by introducing material incentives. He asserted that under socialism interests were in common and,

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, p. 28.

acting fully in keeping with the traditions of crude egalitarian communism, rejected all personal interests, identifying them with bourgeois individualism.¹

These ideas have also directly served the aims of whipping up anti-Sovietism. The wide use of a system of material incentives in the Soviet economy has been treated as a manifestation of "revisionism" and "apostasy", as proof of the "social-capitalist" nature of Soviet society. Considerable help to the Maoists in "theoretically substantiating" and disseminating such inventions is rendered by all kinds of opportunistic elements in West European countries and the United States. B. Gustavsson, P. Sweezy, L. Guberman and other "Left" revisionist theoreticians, for example, contributed to a discussion which was conducted by the American magazine *Monthly Review* between 1964 and 1971. On this question, too, the Maoists and their leftist apologists find themselves on the same wavelength as the bourgeois ideologists, specifically with the exponents of the theory of "convergence of the two systems", who contend that the use of personal economic incentives leads to the "embourgeoisement" of socialist society.

The disastrous economic consequences of the Maoists' policy have demonstrated the impermissibility of disregarding the objective economic law of distribution according to work. The "three red banners" line and the "cultural revolution" had such a negative effect on the economy that, to prevent a crisis situation and stabilize the economy, it became absolutely necessary, at least partially, to restore piece-work, bonuses, wage differentials, etc.

However, these measures have not been introdu-

¹ These theories are expounded in particular, in *Notes on the Textbook of Political Economy*.

ced consistently and egalitarian trends in distribution remain a characteristic feature of the Chinese economy.

4. CONSUMPTION

The realization of the demand for "absolute equality" in the sphere of consumption in the absence of developed productive forces was bound to give rise to a striving for universal asceticism. It was not an abundance of diverse material goods, but "moderation and a simple sufficiency" that were advanced by crude egalitarian communism as the ideal of "reasonable" material prosperity.¹

The rapid growth of needs that accompanied the development of the capitalist mode of production was condemned by the champions of primitive equality as a manifest evil. They fulminated against the bourgeois ideologists who "saw the nation's prosperity in the multitude of its requirements, in an ever growing diversity of its material consumption, in an extensive industry and unlimited trade, in a quick circulation of metallic money and ultimately in the *anxious and insatiable avarice of its citizens*".² The theoreticians of crude communism, who approached economic phenomena above all as moralists, regarded the increase of needs as a source of pernicious passions, and stated bitterly that people had already "acquired habits so baneful and had rashly developed requirements so variegated" that it would be no easy matter to eradicate them under communism. They

¹ True, Buonarrotti's book contains a special section entitled "Abundance, the Aim of Universal Labour", but this abundance is understood as an abundance of bare necessities.

² F. Buonarrotti, Vol. 1, *Conspiration pour l'égalité*, Paris, 1957, p. 26.

thus insisted, among other things, on the strict prohibition, in the future, of trade, money and exchange in any form, considering them conducive to the development of needs and hence to the growth of avarice and egoism.¹ The utopian communists' calls for moderation and asceticism were, to a certain extent, a reaction to the extravagance and luxury of the ruling classes. In this case we also have to do with non-acceptance of the motley variety of the life of the capitalist city opposed to the patriarchal natural economy where needs hardly changed from one generation to the next. Since in the initial stages of capitalism the living standard of the masses was usually extremely low, the real guaranteed provision for all workmen of even the most elementary means of subsistence could be seen as the realization of heaven on earth and conformed to the immediate aspirations of the poorest sections of toilers. But the absolutization of a low level of needs and the desire to preserve it, characteristic of crude communism, contradict the tendency of socio-economic progress, the requirements of the forward development of the productive forces and the long-term vital interests of the working people. Consumption is an integral part of social reproduction; in the long run, it is the absolute aim of all production. The evolution of needs is not fundamentally based on vanity and egoistic ambitions, but is an objective result of the development of the productive forces. Lenin formulated the law of the elevation of needs, according to which the volume of social needs grows and their pattern improves in step with the development of production. With varying

¹ The Maoists used similar arguments in pursuing (in the absence of any objective grounds for this) a policy of curtailing commodity-money relations, which was an element of the "forced march to communism" and a factor in militarizing the economy.

degrees of intensity, the law of the elevation of needs operates throughout human history, but capitalism created—within the framework of contradictions inherent in it—heretofore unprecedented possibilities for its realization. The artificial limitation of needs proposed by crude communism would be an impediment to social production, which is the basis of social progress.

Viewing the problem of consumption through the prism of a “definite, limited standard” and advocating, in effect, “regression to the *unnatural* simplicity of the *poor* and crude man who has few needs and who has not only failed to go beyond private property but has not yet even reached it”,¹ crude communism objectively leads to stagnation of the productive forces, the good intentions of some of its exponents notwithstanding.

Seeking to realize as rapidly as possible the principle of absolute equality on the basis of poorly developed production, the ideologists of egalitarian communism, naturally, advanced to the foreground the problem of redistribution of material goods and not of the vigorous development of social production. They aimed, not to achieve a situation where everyone would consume more, but for strict control to ensure that “no one consumes more than the other”. Thus, the Babouvists, who propounded the principle of “arithmetical equality”, invariably linked the attempt to guarantee that “everyone is sufficiently provided for” with the condition that “no one should have surpluses”, since any “excessive” satisfaction of the needs of some would be at the expense of others. It can be readily seen that these principles reproduce, to a certain extent, the model of the primitive com-

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, pp. 88, 89.

munal system, where the relations of equality naturally stemmed from the low level of production and consumption.

In the "society of equals", asceticism went hand in hand with the levelling of needs. The economic roots of this phenomenon lie in the low level of production where the pattern of social needs is primitive and the possibilities of individual choice extremely limited. The ideologists of primitive equality called for a modest uniformity of needs, which they said was determined by nature itself, and attacked any manifestation of luxury. For instance, Mably demanded the enactment, under communism, of special "laws against luxury" which "must extend to everything: furniture, dwellings, food, servants, clothing. If you leave anything unattended to, you will open up the way to all-pervading abuse. The more rigorous the law, the less dangerous the inequality of properties."¹

This is to demand the most petty, harsh and total regulation of needs and, all aspects of life. Moreover, the very interpretation of luxury by the ideologists of crude communism is arbitrary and subjective. Rigid asceticism can interpret even elementary human needs as extravagances. Dogmatists who accept a single measure of needs established once and for all, find it hard to conceive that articles of consumption which but yesterday appeared to be a luxury can become socially necessary today.

Crude communism considered it essential that in the society of "perfect equality" not a single citizen should "encounter, from any side, the slightest sign even of seeming superiority, that forerunner of domination and slavish submission," and thus could not

¹ G. Mably, *Collection complete des œuvres*, Vol. IX, Paris, 1972, p. 135.

but make the demand for levelling needs an organic element of its ideology. This tendency was characteristic not only of outspoken advocates of "arithmetical equality"—the Babouvists and their followers, but also of theoreticians like Morelly and Cabet, who favoured distribution according to needs but whose severe limitations and regulations virtually eliminated essential distinctions in individual consumption. For instance, Morelly devised strict rules for the clothing of citizens. Cabet envisaged definite uniforms for every age and occupation, standard dwellings with standard furniture, strictly regimented everyday life, etc.

Marx and Engels noted, as we have already mentioned, that the desire for universal levelling bears the stamp of private-property relations and concepts. Moreover, crude communism is "a generalization and consummation"¹ of these relations. In capitalist society, where relations between people tend to become relations between things, where the product of labour dominates man, possession of material property determines the social standing of the individual and the main aspects of his life. Under capitalism the self-assertion of man as a personality is realized primarily and mainly through possession.² Reflecting petty-bourgeois forms of relations, crude communism is unable to overcome this private-proprietary approach, and more often than not "the sole purpose of life and existence is direct, physical pos-

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 88.

² Marx wrote: "Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that an object is only *ours* when... it is directly possessed, eaten, drunk, worn, inhabited, etc.—in short, when it is used by us... In the place of *all* physical and mental senses there has therefore come the sheer estrangement of *all* these senses, the sense of *having*." (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, p. 94.)

*session.*¹ Therefore it presents equal possession of everything as an indispensable condition and most characteristic feature of a genuinely just society.

Noting the "dominion of material property" in the ideas of crude communism, Marx writes that within the framework of this system "the relationship of private property persists as the relationship of the community to the world of things."²

This dependence on possession of things was not, as a rule, emphasized by the champions of "primitive equality"; possibly not all authors were even clearly aware of it, but from the end of the 18th and especially in the 19th century, it was in evidence, even if often indirectly, in the works of the majority of adherents of crude communism, showing through the phrases about asceticism and universal self-denial. At the time of the peasant wars in the late Middle Ages the demands for asceticism and universal equality, clothed in a religious form, represented a fanatical challenge to the relations of the exploitative society, a renunciation of "everything that could reconcile them with the existing social system."³ They helped to develop the revolutionary energy and rally the plebeian masses. However, the development of machine production opened up heretofore unknown possibilities for increasing the quantity of articles of consumption and created conditions that increasingly revolutionized the toiling masses. In this connection Engels wrote: "This asceticism disappears gradually from among the masses, and in the sects, which relied upon it, it degenerates either into bourgeois parsimony or into a high-sounding virtuousness which, in practice,

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 88.

² *Ibid.*, p. 88.

³ F. Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, Moscow, 1965, p. 62.

also comes down to a Philistine, or guild-artisan, niggardliness.”¹ Consonant with these ideas of Engels is the already quoted statement by Marx to the effect that in the epoch of developed capitalist relations envy of wealth, characteristic of any society based on private property, stands behind the principle of leveling propounded by egalitarian communism.

The reactionary striving of crude communism to level and pare down human needs, “to equalize all in poverty” is profoundly alien to Marxism. The “communism of paupers” which the early Christians preached has never been Marxism’s ideal. Today, in the age of the scientific and technological revolution, the propagation of these ideas, covered with the dust of centuries, has been taken up by Maoism; the Chinese theoreticians have declared forced asceticism, “universal poverty” to be an essential element of communist society. In this way they seek to excuse their country’s economic backwardness, an attempt to provide an ideological justification for the canalizing of means from the sphere of consumption into the build-up of the military potential designed to serve the militarist-chauvinistic aims of the Maoist dictatorship. “Poverty is good,” cynically proclaimed the “great helmsman”, for whom it is even “terrible to think of the time when all people are well-off.”

These ideas have found quite a few supporters among the Left-radical circles of the Western intelligentsia and youth. These supporters are, to a certain extent, reacting to the contradictions of the capitalist “consumer society”, a reaction which in conditions of the crisis of traditional bourgeois values and in the absence of a scientific understanding of true historical perspectives expresses itself in this eulogy

¹ F. Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, Moscow, 1965, p. 63.

of "sacred poverty" and the idealization of Chinese society as a cure-all for the vices of modern bourgeois civilization.

Marxism-Leninism, basing itself on the objective trends of socio-economic progress and the development of the productive forces, which extend man's influence over nature, is for the full and all-round satisfaction of man's material requirements which, in the case of the great majority of the population, have been very poorly satisfied over the course of long historical epochs (poorly even by the standards of those epochs), and in the effort to satisfy which many generations of working people have been compelled to spend all their energies.

Scientific communism has never meant to establish a "kingdom of philistine satiety", to turn the perpetual chase after material blessings into the universal and all-embracing aim of human life. As distinct from bourgeois ideologists and contrary to the Maoists' strident calls, Marxism-Leninism regards satisfaction of material requirements, not as an end in itself, but as a factor for the flourishing and perfection of man's higher, spiritual requirements. "The scientific conception of communism has nothing in common either with the pharisaical 'philosophy' of poverty as a 'blessing' or with the bourgeois-philistine cult of things. Material wealth in the Marxist-Leninist understanding is created to satisfy the reasonable requirements of people and is a necessary prerequisite for the development of human abilities, for the individual to find fulfilment."¹

¹ *Lenin's Ideas and Cause are Immortal. On the Centenary of the Birth of V. I. Lenin. Theses of the Central Committee, Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow*, p. 54.

5. THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Analysing the individual-society relationships in different sectors of the system of crude egalitarian communism, Marx passed a stern judgement on it as a system which "negates the *personality* of man in every sphere."¹ This conclusion was based on an analysis of the objective conditions to which the individual was to be inevitably subjected by the system of crude egalitarian communism. Marxism demands that in assessing some or other ideas "we turn our attention to the essence of the matter and not to the words,"² no matter how beautiful and sincere-sounding they may be: the road to hell is paved with good intentions. The works of the founders of early communism are full of slogans about man's freedom and happiness. As a rule, it was not deliberate demagogy: fighting for the realization of their ideals, many risked and even sacrificed their lives. And yet one cannot pass over in silence the crying contradictions between these noble aims and the means whereby these aims were to be accomplished, the contradictions which ultimately led to the deformation of the aims themselves.

In opposing bourgeois individualism, the "war of everyone against everyone" which was the result of capitalist competition, crude egalitarian communism put forward the principle of "universal community". But this community could not ensure real harmony between the individual and society and more often than not became suppression of the personality "for the sake of the general good". In its most extreme form this tendency called for the renunciation of

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 88.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 28.

even the family and friendship as "essential attributes" of the world of property and individualism interfering with work for the general good.

The very logic of total levelling which permeated the system of crude egalitarian communism demanded strictest administrative control over the entire life and activity of man and predetermined the approach to him from the "limited measure" positions. Economic backwardness did not provide the real conditions for man's all-round development.

The founders of Marxism rejected the view, no matter in what form it was expressed, which associated communism with the suppression and levelling of the personality of man.

Marxism-Leninism never developed the demand for equality into an attempt to level human activity to one pattern, and the establishment of social equality was regarded, not as an end in itself, but as a condition for the free all-round development of people. As Marx stressed in his characteristically dialectical way, communism is a system which itself creates its distinctions and the inequality of which is nothing else but the many-coloured refraction of equality.

Only a truly communist society can guarantee the flourishing and harmonious development of every individual. Instead of being a means of socio-economic development, which he was in exploitative societies, man becomes the direct aim of this development. Humanistic thought at all times aspired to this. Marxism led these ideas out of the realm of dreams and showed objective conditions for their realization. Only on the basis of highly developed productive forces can there take place the "development of *all* members of society worthy of man. All the previous social formations have been too poor for this." Only this basis makes possible the creation of an abun-

dance of products, the elimination of arduous, non-creative types of labour, a sharp increase in leisure time enabling man to develop all his capabilities, etc. It stands to reason that to realize this aim something else is needed besides developed productive forces. Relations of genuine communist collectivism must be established—relations of a free association of people free from exploitation who exercise systematic collective control over the social productive forces in the interests of all the members of society and each of them separately. Genuinely communist collectivism is characterized by relations of comradeship and mutual assistance when the creative, many-sided, free intercourse of people furthers the spiritual enrichment and development of each of them.

The founders of Marxism emphasized that in communist society the harmonious unity of the individual and society would be achieved. "It goes without saying that society cannot free itself unless every individual is freed,"¹ Engels wrote. He considered that the phrase "the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" from the *Communist Manifesto* reflected most precisely the basic idea of the coming communist era.

Lenin pointed out that the new society should set for itself the central task of "ensuring *full* well-being and free, *all-round* development for *all* the members of society."² "Everything for man, for the benefit of man" has become the motto of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet state. As the socialist economy develops and the system of socialist relations improves, ever broader possibilities open up for the accomplishment of this task. This fully accords with the demands of the scientific

¹ F. Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1962, p. 403.

² V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 54.

and technological revolution and, specifically those stemming from the growing role of science as a direct productive force. Modern production requires more and more highly-qualified and creatively thinking workers, less confined within the bounds of narrow division of labour. All-round development of the individual becomes an imperative, and a condition for the further progress of highly developed productive forces.

The capitalist mode of production with its profound internal antagonisms comes into conflict with the objective demand of the scientific and technological revolution for the all-round development of all the members of society. Only a society organized according to the principles of scientific communism can accomplish this task. This objective historical necessity once again brings out the narrowness and reactionary character of the system of crude egalitarian communism which molds a type of personality incapable of becoming the agent of socio-economic progress. The ramified system of universal suppression of individuality, the attempt to level intellect, the spiritual impoverishment of man and the dominance of a narrow, limited measure as the universal criterion of social activity, produce not a creative, socially-active personality, but rather a kind of robot mechanically operating in accordance with the code fed into it. It is precisely such a type of personality that the Maoist dictatorship is seeking to develop. It needs men and women obedient to its adventuristic manipulations, and hence the "ideal" citizen: the mute, "non-rusting cog obedient to Chairman Mao's will".

This anti-human, utterly reactionary line has nothing in common with the principles of Marxism-Leninism, and the objective requirements of social progress.

A society based on the principles of crude egalita-

rian communism, on administrative-directive methods of leadership combined with egalitarian distribution, with the rigid regimentation and levelling of requirements and of the entire way of life was called by Marx "barracks communism". The analogy with the principles of organization adopted in the army, far from being rejected, was often stressed by the ideologists of crude egalitarian communism themselves. For example, in Morelly's society the citizens working in agriculture are united, army-like, into an "agricultural corps", and in Weitling's there exist "school" and "industrial" armies. The Babouvists' views were influenced by the wartime measures carried out by the Jacobin dictatorship (centralization of supply, rationing, etc.), and even ideas about material well-being were associated with uniformly modest, but guaranteed army allowance.

An article printed by the French communist newspaper *Fraternité* in December 1841 contained a direct reference to the army as the model for the practical realization of communist principles.

As we have already noted, such views were taken by the Trotskyites and then by the Maoists. Setting its course on direct militarization of all spheres of social life, the Chinese leadership demanded that the workers, peasants and office employees become a "liberation army not dressed in uniforms".

Bourgeois authors ascribe features of barrack-room life to Marxism and gloss over the fundamental distinctions between the genuinely scientific com-

¹ For example, the German publicist E. Richter maintains that in "socialized society" "absolutely everything" is regimented: how much each person is to work, to eat and drink, how to live and dress himself, and makes the conclusion that "socialist community" is even more austere than the military community. These views are echoed by bourgeois economists like Hayek and

unist ideal and a system based on the principles of crude egalitarianism.¹

In the economic model of crude egalitarian communism the necessary objective internal connections of the process of reproduction—those between production and consumption, between production and distribution—are disrupted; stimuli of economic growth, individual in character and socially necessary in importance, are undermined; direct restrictions are imposed on the development of vital elements of the productive forces (man, science). For this reason the system of crude egalitarian communism runs counter, in its objective content, to the real requirements of social progress and represents coercion of reality. As Karl Marx wrote, crude communism "is not the goal of human development, the form of human society".¹

Chinese practice confirms the utopian character of crude egalitarian communism and its complete lack of historical perspective. When, in pursuit of their adventurist aims, the Maoists try particularly hard to implant the complex of principles of crude egalitarian communism and do so on a particularly large scale, life discomfits their designs, demonstrating their untenability. Take the catastrophic outcome of the "great leap forward", in the course of which the Maoists undertook, in the spirit of crude egalitarian communism, an attempt "to break by storm into the kingdom of communism" in contrast to the "revisionist" policy of the Soviet Union with its alleged

Mises and theoreticians of "centrally managed economy" and "command economics". L. Mises, for instance, asserts that under socialism, where economic methods of management and material stimulation are allegedly absent, "the whole nation forms one single army with compulsory service." (L. Mises, *Socialism*, London, 1951, p. 529.)

¹ K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 101.

"long drawn-out marking of time at the stage of socialism". Under the pressure of objective reality, the Maoists were compelled to give up some crude egalitarian precepts which had particularly strongly compromised themselves.

On the whole, however, the crude egalitarian line remains an organic component of the Maoist policy. Within and outside the country, the Maoists actively propagate reactionary-utopian concepts of communist society which have much in common with the malicious insinuations of bourgeois anti-communist ideologists.

The Maoist adventurist policy is costing the Chinese working people dear and is counter to their vital interests. The Maoists' pernicious line contradicts the fundamental principles of scientific communism. More often than not, what Mao Tse-tung claims to be the "highest", "creative" development of Marxism-Leninism in the socio-economic field proves to be a galvanization of threadbare utopian concepts rejected long ago by scientific communism.

In the present conditions criticism of the principles of crude egalitarian communism is an important part of the struggle for the purity of the ideas of scientific communism, for the exposure of the anti-Leninist policy of the Maoist dictatorship. This criticism also serves the aim of warning the peoples of other countries against the danger of a voluntarist and subjectivist approach to questions of socialist construction.

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